

Preserving Forest Grove

Newsletter of the Historic Landmarks Board

The Pioneer Livery Stable—Then & Now

By Margie Waltz-Actor

Our pride is growing and showing right on Pacific Ave and Main Street in Forest Grove Oregon. When I was asked to provide my first article for the newsletter as a new board member to the Historic Landmarks Board, I immediately thought of the Johnson Building built in 1886. It represents why I have decided to participate in the community's board that supports the preservation of historic buildings.

Over a hundred years ago at the corner of Main and Pacific Avenue, visitors and townsfolk on horseback or riding wagons could count

on a place where their horses and wagons would be well taken care of: Johnson & Son Livery Stable. The building was built in 1898, was big, cost \$ 5,000 to build, made of brick and sat on a basalt block foundation. Large old growth beams supported floors of the building and still exist in the building today. Wagons, carriages and buggies were taken care of on the street level floor, and hay and other supplies were stored on the second floor. Horses were cared for in the

basement. In many ways the building resembled a big in-town barn. Unlike barns found on local farms, the Johnson Livery Stable made use of a full sized elevator using weights and pulleys. The elevator made it easier to move hay and feed up and down the floors. Evidence of the well used elevator still exists today in the basement of the building. The Main Street side of the building

displayed painted advertising signs as seen in the picture below. If you stand on Main Street facing the Livery Building (looking east), you can still see very faint remnants of paint residue on the brick wall. Because of the Livery Building location, it served as the headquarters of the



The Pioneer Livery Stable circa 1900

Tillamook Stage Line. Eventually, Johnson joined up with a local blacksmith, Mr. Buxton, to sell wagons, buggies, harvesters, plows and other farm machinery. In 1906 the main floor of the Livery was leased to the Goff brothers for a hardware business.

During the years as the building aged and new businesses occupied the Livery Building,

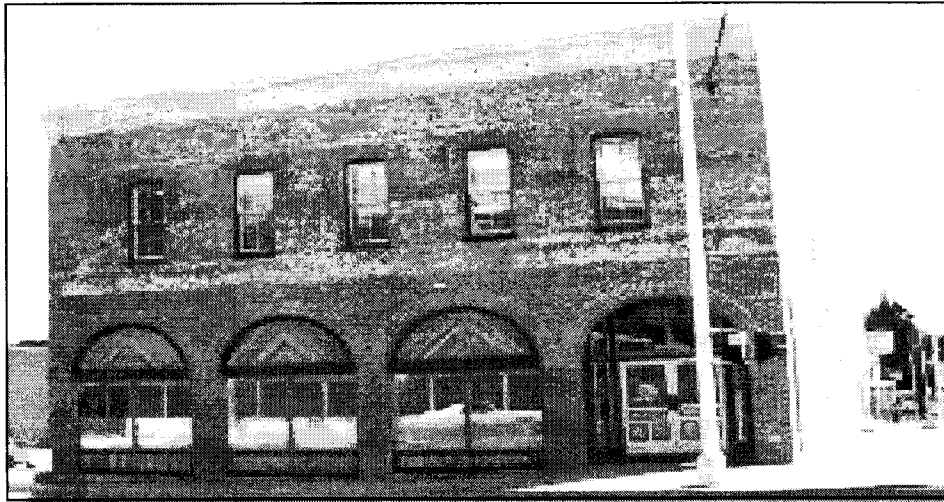
structural changes were made. For example, the false brick windows in the front of the building were replaced with glass windows. The two large arched livery doors were eventually replaced with store front plate glass windows, then changed in the 1980's to modern office windows. Arched doors and windows taken out over the years were replaced in 1985 with new arched windows and doorways resembling the original design from 1898. Customers and clients needed a double front door so the old skinny livery door had to go. The basement windows still occupy

the same space they did one hundred years ago. A picture window was added to the Northwest corner. Because of building codes and safety laws, the old elevator had to go too. It was replaced with a modern exterior elevator on the east side of the building. Great efforts were made to make the exterior elevator blend in with original building design. During all the years the Livery Building stood on Main and Pacific Avenue, one thing has not changed: the pressed tin cornice at the top of the second floor. If you stand in front of the Pacific Avenue windows today and look up you can not miss the words at the top "Johnson & Son."

Growing up in Forest Grove, I remember this

building standing out significantly as a child. I would ride my bicycle up town on my own to buy my mother things for her Christmas stocking at the 88 Cents Store. I can remember roaming the cement floor isles for kitchen gadgets that she needed.

As time passed, the building was occupied as a gift store, "The Carousel", complete with a real carousel in the middle of the store. I would accompany my mother as she searched for gifts or goodies for herself. I remember it being difficult to keep my hands off the fabulous carousel.



The Pioneer Livery Stable in 2006

As I grew up and went off to college, my father, Loren Waltz was looking for a new location to accommodate his growing insurance agency and purchased the Johnson building in 1984 with Michael Moore. The Livery building was renovated by Brittell Design, Inc. in three phases. The two story redesign facilitated four established professional offices in Forest Grove; an attorney, an accountant, the insurance firm and administrative offices for the Pacific University's School of Professional Psychology. The 10,000 square foot office building, located in the most dominant position in downtown Forest Grove, remains a fine example of the architectural heritage of the past, but continues to serve effectively our contemporary need.

The Historic Landmarks Board Welcomes its Newest Member, Margie Waltz-Actor

I have lived in Forest Grove since I was three, the oldest of three girls. Upon graduation from Forest Grove High School, I went to Oregon State University graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in 1986. Returning to Forest Grove, I worked for my family's business, WSC Insurance, presently located in the Historic Livery Stable building in downtown Forest Grove. After seventeen years in the insurance business, I was ready for a career change. Following the footsteps of my grandmother, Ann Waltz, who sold real estate for

thirty years, I am now working for John L. Scott-Market Center as a real estate broker.

My husband I purchased the W.R.Taylor, M.D. house in Forest Grove in 1990. Three generations of my family have lived in this national registered home. Having a deep rooted commitment to the preservation and maintenance of historic structures in Forest Grove, I look forward to working on the Historic Landmarks Board to help ensure a part of our past remains a part of our future.

The Pioneer Connection

The Friends of Historic Forest Grove are presenting a benefit for the preservation of the A.T. Smith property!

Saturday, August 19; Noon to 5:00 PM; Elm Street (south of Hwy 47) in Forest Grove

The \$10 Sandwich Deal includes: hot pork sandwich & beans, drink, ice cream and wagon ride

The \$5 Hot Dog Deal includes: hotdog, drink, ice cream and wagon ride



Advance Tickets: Your Travel Place at Main Street & Pacific Ave
You can also pick up tickets at the event.

Visit www.historicforestgrove.org for further information.

New Grant Funding Available

As most readers know, the Historic Landmarks Board operates a renovation grant program to help property owners offset the cost of doing historically accurate renovation projects. This money is provided by the waste transfer station on the west side of town and is handed out to various groups by the city council. So with each new fiscal year, the HLB gets renewed funding - this year our grant was \$10,000! Have a project that you've been thinking about taking care of on your historic home? Come talk to us. We'll reimburse up to half the cost of the work. Contact James Reitz at 503-992-3233 for more information.

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The Forest Grove Historic Landmarks Board Grant Program

Is your house on our local register? If it is, did you know that your house is eligible for restoration / rehabilitation grant funding? The Historic Landmarks Board has funds to help you with your projects. If you are planning any exterior restoration work such as restoring architectural features or if you have structural work to do such a foundation repair, we'd love to help. We fund projects up to 50% of the cost of the job per grant. Come see us! We can also help you find historically appropriate solutions to any problems you may have.

The Forest Grove Historic Landmarks Board

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Preserving Forest Grove is a quarterly newsletter published by the Forest Grove Historic Landmarks Board to help fulfill its duty of public education regarding the preservation of cultural resources. If you would like to be on the mailing list, please call James Reitz at 503-992-3233, or JReitz@ci.forest-grove.or.us.

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